

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-04 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SIL-01 COME-00 LAB-01 EB-04 NIC-01 ACDA-05

OMB-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 /075 W

----- 094661

R 231826Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION USBERLIN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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USBERLIN FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, ELAB, GW

SUBJECT: MITBESTIMMUNG POLEMICS CONTINUE

REF: BONN 16477, 16472, 16404, 16346, 16237, 16036;

DUSSELDORF 0939

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BEGIN SUMMARY: DGB LEADERS CONTINUE TO ATTACK THE

AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR OPPOSING THE EXTENSION OF MITBESTIMMUNG. MOST NEWSPAPERS CONTINUE TO CHIDE DGB VETTER FOR HIS STATEMENT THAT THE FRG "IS NO BANANA REPUBLIC." THE LATEST ROUND BEGAN WHEN A COLUMNIST IN BILD AM SONNTAG ATTACKED VETTER . VETTER IN TURN ACCUSED THE COLUMNIST AND HIS PUBLISHER, AXEL SPRINGER, OF BEING IN LEAGUE WITH THE OPPONENTS OF MITBESTIMMUNG. END SUMMARY.

1. THE UPROAR OVER THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GREW LOUDER THIS PAST WEEK ON OCTOBER 19 THE DELEGATES OF THE PRINTERS UNION CONVENTION PASSED A RESOLUTION SPONSORED BY APPROXIMATELY 50 LEFTISTS "PROTESTING THE ATTEMPT (BY MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS) TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS ON CODETERMINATION."

2. THE NEXT DAY DGB EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER GERHARD SCHMIDT TOLD THE DELEGATES AT THE POSTAL WORKERS UNION CONVENTION THAT THE OPPONENTS OF MITBESTIMMUNG WERE IN THEIR LAST BATTLE AND WERE USING THEIR "INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS" AS AUXILIARY TROOPS. REAFFIRMING THAT THE FRG IS NO "BANANA REPUBLIC," SCHMIDT ACCUSED THE CDU-CSU, GERMAN AND AMERICAN FIRMS OF FORMING AN ALLIANCE TO FIGHT MITBESTIMMUNG. HE SAID THAT AMERICANS WOULD CERTAINLY FIND IT INAPPROPRIATE IF A FOREIGN INSTITUTE SHOULD TRY TO INTERFERE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO FURTHER DEVELOP THEIR SOCIETY. HE CALLED ON GERMAN FIRMS TO DISASSOCIATE THEMSELVES FROM THE EFFORTS OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OR RISK THE DISTRUST OF GERMAN WORKERS.

3. ON OCTOBER 20, PETER BOENISCH, A COLUMNIST IN AXEL SPRINGER'S BILD AM SONNTAG RIDICULED THE DGB PRESIDENT FOR ATTACKING THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. BOENISCH CALLED VETTER "REICHMARSCHALL" AND POKED FUN AT THE DGB FOR DISHING IT OUT BUT NOT BEING ABLE TO TAKE IT. HE ALSO SAID THAT VETTER HAD A "SOUR MOUTH." HE ENDED-SAYING, "IN 1974 IT IS EASY TO INSULT THE AMERICANS. IN 1934 IT WAS ALSO EASY TO INSULT THE JEWS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMPARISONS ARE ALWAYS UNSATISFACTORY. BUT THE ENTHUSIASM IS THE SAME." BOENISCH'S COLUMN WAS A PERFECT TARGET FOR VETTER'S ADRENALIN. TO THE APPLAUDING DELEGATES AT THE POSTAL WORKERS CONVENTION VETTER PROCLAIMED: BEGIN TEXT:

... IT IS OUR EXPLICIT OBJECTIVE TO SECURE AND TO DEVELOP FURTHER THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AND THE STATE,

BASED ON LAW AND SOCIAL JUSTICE. THIS CLEAR STATEMENT
MAKES LIARS OF ALL THOSE WHO OVER AND OVER ARE ATTEMPT-
ING TO CHARGE US WITH VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION,
SEIZING POWER AND TRYING TO ESTABLISH A TRADE UNION
STATE. IN REALITY, IT IS THOSE WHO DISRESPECT THE
BASIC LAW, WHO REFUSE TO FULFILL THE CONSTITUTIONALLY
PRESCRIBED RESPONSIBILITIES ATTENDING THE OWNERSHIP OF
PROPERTY AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL CITIZENS,
WHO INSIST UPON OBSOLETE RIGHTS OF DOMINATION AND HAVE
FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THAT DEMOCRACY MEANS LITERALLY
"DOMINATION BY THE PEOPLE" AND NOT "DOMINATION BY
CAPITAL."

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AT THE SAME PLACE LAST WEEK, I CATEGORICALLY OPPOSED THE ATTEMPT OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO INTERFERE WITH GERMAN CODETERMINATION IN BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN CORPORATIONS. THOSE INVOLVED NATURALLY DID NOT LIKE MY CLEAR WORDS. IT IS STRIKING, HOWEVER, THAT THE LARGEST GERMAN PRESS CORPORATION, OF AXEL CAESAR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SPRINGER, PRESENTS ITSELF AS THE MOST UNCOMPROMISING ADVOCATE OF AMERICAN BIG BUSINESS, DELIVERING IN THE LATEST ISSUE OF BILD AM SONNTAG A BROADSIDE OF DEFAMATION AGAINST ME. THIS MAY OPEN THE EYES OF MORE WORKERS AND DEMONSTRATE WHOSE INTERESTS ARE REPRESENTED BY BILDZEITUNG.

BUT IT IS NOT ONLY THAT THEY ARE LYING AND AGITATING, THEY ALSO TRY TO RESORT TO PERSONAL DEFAMATION AND HUMILIATION. HERR BOENISCH WRITES ABOUT MY SOUR MOUTH WITH DROOPING CORNERS. HOWEVER, HE NATURALLY FORGETS TO EXPLAIN THE TRUE REASON, NAMELY THAT THEY SHOT MY JAW, AND THAT I WAS CLOSE TO DYING LIKE MILLIONS OF OTHERS.

I AM NOT SENSITIVE. THE ATTACKS WERE NOT DIRECTED AGAINST MY PERSON, I ONLY WAS THE BUTT. THEY WANTED TO HIT AGAIN THE GERMAN LABOR MOVEMENT. BUT IF HERR BOENISCH COMPARES THE TRADE UNION REPUDIATION OF THE PROVOCATION OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WITH THE PERSECUTION OF JEWS DURING THE THIRD REICH, THIS IS AN INFAMOUS AND AN INCREDIBLE INSULT TO ALL THOSE WHO SUFFERED FROM RACIAL AND POLITICAL PERSECUTION UNDER HITLER'S DICTATORSHIP, AMONG WHOM THERE WERE MANY TRADE UNIONISTS.

ALL OF US SHOULD THINK ABOUT HOW TO MEET ACTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY THE GROWING POISONING OF PUBLIC OPINION, HOW TO PROTECT OUR DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM, AND FINALLY OUR TRADE UNION RIGHTS AGAINST THOSE MOLES WHICH AGAIN WISH TO UNDERMINE THEM. I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD SOON AND ENERGETICALLY BEGIN TO TACKLE THESE TASKS, AND I HOPE THAT YOUR CONGRESS WILL BRING ABOUT INITIATIVES AND PROPOSALS. WE TRADE UNIONISTS HAVE STARTED TO MAKE THIS DEMOCRACY A GENUINE HOME OF ALL WORKING

PEOPLE. WE WILL NOT LET IT BE UNDERMINED BY REACTION-
ARY FORCES AS WAS THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC. WE WILL NOT
ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE CONFUSED BY STORIES WHICH AGAIN
IN THESE DAYS ARE BEING DISPERSED AGAINST US BY EM-
PLOYER-SUBORDINATE PUBLICATIONS. OUR STRENGTH LIES
IN THE UNITED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT WHICH HAS DEVELOPED
OUT OF THE EXPERIENCES OF HISTORY. UNITED AND IN
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SOLIDARITY, WE WILL WARD OFF ALL ENEMIES OF DEMOCRACY
AND SOCIAL PROGRESS. TO USE HANS BOECKLER'S WORDS AT
THE FOUNDING CONGRESS OF DGB 25 YEARS AGO, "THE GERMAN
WORKERS WILL NOT BE CHEATED A SECOND TIME*" END TEXT.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW, PRESS COMMENTS, PRINTING, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS, LABOR UNIONS, FOREIGN INVESTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BONN16711
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740302-0933
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741025/aaaaaumh.tel
Line Count: 241
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BONN 16477, 16472, 16404, 16346, 162, 37, 16036;
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <06-Aug-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MITBESTIMMUNG POLEMICS CONTINUE
TAGS: PGOV, ELAB, GE, US, (SPRINGER, AXEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005